

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If the gentleman will yield, I wear a size 15. I don't think that you probably can stand in my shoes with your shoes on.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. It would be pretty tight.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we thank Speaker PELOSI for allowing us this time. We can always be found at 30—Something Working Group on the Speaker's Web site, www.speaker.gov.

WHAT IS CONGRESS' PLAN FOR AFFORDABLE ENERGY?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ARCURI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about a different subject than you've been hearing about, one that I think should be talked about in the halls of Congress here: What is Congress doing about available, affordable energy for America?

I know it's Halloween, but when we find out the price of oil today on the market, we are all going to think it's a Halloween joke.

First, I want to show the record of oil prices, of how they have been rising. Now, this doesn't show the spikes up and down all along. These are annual average prices.

Just last week I was here speaking and we were at \$90. But today I think we're off this chart because at the close of business on Wall Street today, oil was \$94.53 a barrel.

I don't know about you, but that puts fear in my heart. The winter season is coming. People are going to need to keep their homes heated. People are going to need fuel to drive their cars. The American economy is going to need affordable energy to compete in the global economy. On October 31, 2007, oil closed at \$94.53.

Now, 6 years ago, it doesn't show it on the chart, but 6 years ago, natural gas was \$2 a thousand; now it's \$8. Oil was \$16. This is a 600 percent increase in oil prices in just 6 years.

Is it an issue? It hasn't been mentioned here today. It wasn't mentioned here yesterday. It wasn't debated last week. We are going to have record high home heating oil prices for those heating their homes, record high diesel prices for those who are transporting our goods up and down the highways, and so I guess the fair question is, what is Congress's plan for affordable energy for America?

Months ago I was down here on the floor and debated the House bill. The House passed a bill. We'll talk about it later in content. And simultaneously a little later, and the Senate is usually a little behind, they passed a bill. Now, you would think with energy prices spiking to record levels, there would be some sense of urgency in Congress. There would be some sense of urgency to get the Senate bill and the House

bill together and get it on the floor to help Americans meet their energy needs.

Now, we have had some interesting things happen here. Speaker PELOSI forced the curator, those who run the Capitol here, to switch from coal to gas so we could lessen our carbon imprint. Now, that's going to cost the taxpayers \$3 or \$4 million because gas is the clean, green fuel and she thought it was better that we heat the Capitol with gas and not coal. Now, what is interesting is it would seem like we should be about conserving. I haven't seen a dollar appropriated to put double-pane windows in all of the Capitol complex. Most of them are single-pane glass. Now, most of us at home have done better than that. My office building, single-pane glass. On a cold winter day it frosts right up. It transmits lots of heat out, lots of heat in. Depending on where the heat is, it goes right through single-pane glass. But wouldn't it make more sense to conserve energy in the Capitol complex and do energy efficient windows and doors? No, we just switched fuels and spent an extra \$4 million so our carbon imprint was less.

Now, we have also mandated that all government agencies, including ourselves, use those little round fluorescent screw-in light bulbs. I have some at home. My wife doesn't like them. I don't like them if it's a reading light. At least they vary. They are not the same quality of the incandescent bulb we are used to. We're spoiled. But we have mandated those in every appropriations bill this year, and what's disappointing, though, is that they are all made in China. We are mandating that our light bulbs come from China.

Now, while we talk about energy, we can talk about why we have such high prices. I want to switch charts here. And here we have a chart of the percentage of imports for America. Now, this chart is a little behind. It actually is almost up to 70 now. Every year we increase dependence on foreign, unstable countries by 2 percent. That's in the last decade. Every year. I think that number is going to increase, and I will explain to you why later, that it may even go up faster.

Now, while we are becoming more and more dependent on foreign oil, we have countries like China and India, and this is one of the reasons for high energy prices today. We have always been the only big user. We have always been the big dog economically. Well, we're one of the pack now. There are a lot of big dogs out there. China and India's energy use is increasing between 15 and 20 percent a year. They are building a coal plant in China every 5 days. They are opening a new nuclear plant for electricity every month. They are building the largest hydrodams ever known in the world routinely. They are buying up oil and gas reserves and making deals with other countries all over the globe so that China has the energy it needs to run its country.

What is America doing? We will talk about that.

America does not have an adequate sense of urgency about providing energy for America, affordable energy for America. We passed a bill in 2005 that had a lot of positive incentives. But the problem is when you pass a bill, it's years before you have production of energy. And many of the incentives that were in that bill, many of the things that were helping us produce more energy are now being tried to be rolled back by the Democrat bills that are going to come before us, that have come before us, and will come back before us again in a conference report, and we will talk about that in more detail.

What does America want us to do? Well, the Americans I talk to, they want to be able to afford to heat their homes and drive a decent car. They'd like to be able to afford to buy food and other things after they pay their energy bills.

Now, these energy bills that have been passed some months ago have been languishing. I haven't heard much discussion. In fact, I haven't heard of a conference committee meeting.

□ 2130

It doesn't seem like 3 weeks ago when we had \$80 oil; that was enough sense of urgency. It doesn't seem like last week when we had \$90 oil; that was enough sense of urgency. And here we are at \$94.53 oil, and that doesn't seem like enough sense of urgency. Now, reading the Wall Street Journal today, the article was scary, it said, "We don't expect oil to stop at 100."

Now, I expected energy to get expensive this year. I've been predicting it. And I had someone say, How did you know that? And I said, You've just got to be watching what's going on. There's an oil shortage in the world. There is tremendous demand because all the developing countries are now driving cars and have factories and are using energy. And specifically the big ones, like China and India, their economies are growing at record paces, are consuming a lot of energy. And we're going to be competing with them down the road.

What scares me, and I'm going to put \$94.53 back up here, because that's correct. Here is what's scary about \$94.53 oil. We, for the first time in many years, have not had a storm in the gulf. Every time we have a major storm in the gulf, it reduces supply of oil and gas; about 40 percent of our energy comes from the gulf. So when a storm like Katrina or Rita hits the gulf, or even one not as severe as them, it shuts in a lot of oil for weeks and months, and any damage that's done to rigs or refineries or pipelines or processing stations for the gas, it just shuts down capacity. We get a lot less energy after a Katrina. Some of those were not repaired for 9 months to a year, and that energy is just lost. You just don't get it because you have to keep producing every day.

Now, we have not had, for the first time in years, a storm in the gulf that has disrupted any amount of supply. That's a record. We always have at least one storm. And we still have a few weeks left, but the season is getting short. We have not had an unstable country. And the fact that's scary with \$94.53 oil is that now about 90 percent of the oil in the world, of known reserves, is not owned by companies, but is owned, produced, refined and marketed by dictator, unstable, unfriendly governments. So a majority of the energy in the world is controlled by unfriendly, dictator-type governments. And if one of those tips over and their 3 million barrel a day is disrupted, where will the price go?

I asked one of the large energy producers this week in my office, I said, what if we have a storm in the gulf? \$120 oil in 2 days, a serious storm. And this company knows because they produce there; they produce about one-third of the gulf. What if a terrorist struck a sending port or a ship or a major pipeline or a major refinery? Where will energy prices be? These are all potentials.

And I have been predicting this, and I have energy experts tell me I'm probably not wrong, we will read in the paper one of these days where China has purchased the total supply of some country that normally sold us oil, and that oil will no longer be available to us.

And on gasoline, we don't produce enough in this country. We don't have enough refining capacity. Twenty percent of our gasoline comes from Europe because when they switched to diesel, they have excess gasoline capacity, so they sell us gasoline. And this spring, when we had abnormally high gasoline prices, we had 60-some-dollar oil and we had \$3 gasoline. And I was shaking my head, what's going on here? That's not normal. But that's what was happening. And so I checked, and here Europe was short on gasoline. They didn't have enough to sell us. And so there was a shortage in the marketplace, and of course Wall Street ran it up, abnormally high prices.

Now, today, with \$94.53 oil, or more than \$90 all week, if that translated into a market gasoline price, we're probably talking somewhere between \$3.39 a gallon for gasoline and \$3.59 a gallon of gasoline, depending on where you're at in the country. That's a long ways above the \$3 price that we're approaching right now. And that's going to come because 80-something-dollar oil will put us at \$3.19, \$3.29 gasoline; \$90 oil is going to push us up into the mid \$3. And it's just a matter of time because, at the end of the summer driving season, when we switch the refineries over to make it home heating oil, there was a little surplus of gasoline in the marketplace, and so it has held the price down. And when that burns off and there is none of that left, we will be paying a lot higher prices to drive our cars because the truck people, the

fuel oil is already up there. It's already higher, much higher. And home heating oil is much higher. Those who didn't fill their tank early this year for home heating have missed that opportunity because those high prices are already there.

The question I ask, I was concerned, and there are those who I've talked with that know a lot more than I felt that \$75 oil for any period of time would put America into a recession. Now, that didn't happen, because we've had higher than 75 now for quite a while. What figure can the American economy absorb and not go into recession? All of our recessions have been energy driven, almost all of them. I think maybe there was one that wasn't, one or two. Every time we've had a recession in this country, and they last for years, a lot of people lose their jobs, employment slips, tax revenues are down, the government doesn't have enough money to pay its bills, a lot of Americans are hurting, unemployment rates go up. What figure can America absorb and not have a recession? Well, I don't think we have any wiggle room. I don't personally think we can handle this for a very long period of time. I'm not the expert, but a lot of people agree with me.

And I want to tell you, it's almost guaranteed that this is not the ceiling. See, we don't have a spike here because of a Katrina, a country tipping over, or some terrorist attack in the supply line system. Things are kind of going along. Now, there is a lot of instability in the world, but there is always lots of instability in the Middle East, so those little tremors come and go. So, what price can the American economy absorb? I don't think much higher.

The other thing that we don't talk about is natural gas prices a lot because people don't realize that natural gas prices are not like oil. This is a world price. Natural gas prices are country by country. And for 6 years now America has had one of the highest natural gas prices in the world, and that puts all of the manufacturers in this country who use it for heat and who use it as an ingredient, and we will talk a little more about that later, are at a tremendous disadvantage because of our continued very high natural gas prices.

Yes, it wasn't very long ago, just 6 years, that we had \$2 gas and \$16 oil, and today, we have \$94.53 oil. And our dependency is at 66 and will soon be 70. America should be concerned about that.

I remember people talking that, when oil was cheap and gas was cheap, use foreign oil. We will use theirs while it's cheap, and we will use ours when it's expensive. Well, theirs is expensive, but we're not using ours.

Here is the map that's interesting. These red circles are areas loaded with natural gas and oil, and they're off limits to production. We're the only country in the world that says our Outer Continental Shelf, that's around the

edges, 85 percent of it, is not open to production. Canada produces there, Great Britain produces there, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, New Zealand, Australia. Now those are all environmentally sensitive countries; they all produce there. Norway has become a rich country because of their offshore oil finds.

And a lot of people talk about Brazil being energy independent because of ethanol. Ethanol was just a piece of the pie. Brazil also went offshore and produced their energy. America, for 26 years, a combination of Presidential and congressional moratoriums from producing energy on the Outer Continental Shelf, and many parts of the Midwest like this one are locked up, too. And the legislation that's coming before us will lock it up some more.

Now, I don't understand that. I don't understand where a six-inch hole in the ground with a steel casing producing oil or gas, and specifically clean natural gas, is a threat to our environment. All the studies show that offshore, the majority of the oil that's found is from leakage of ships or natural seeps, because when oil is under high pressure underground, it will find its way to the surface. In fact, I come from Titusville, Pennsylvania, the home of the first oil well, Drake Well. We're all very proud of that. It changed the world, it started the Industrial Revolution. It started the new transportation system. Oil that was transportable, refinable, and it developed this country into the power it is today.

And it has the potential today of making us a second-rate nation because we refuse to use our own energy and we're forcing ourselves to purchase from unstable, undependable countries around the world. And their \$95 oil, they're going to own us.

We just heard people talking here about them buying our debt. Yeah. Because we're spending so much of our resources purchasing energy that we have, but we've locked it up. I just find it amazing.

Now we're going to look at the legislation that should be coming, but there doesn't seem to be any sense of urgency. This is sort of a compilation of the energy bills that have passed both the House and the Senate and have not been conferenced on.

Now, first what we're going to talk about is it locks up 9 trillion cubic feet of American natural gas. It cuts off production from the Roan Plateau, a huge clean natural gas field in Colorado that was set aside as a national oil reserve in 1912 because of its rich energy resources for our future. This means that 9 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, more than all the natural gas the OCS bill that passed last Congress was put off limits.

Roan Plateau has already gone through NEPA. That's the environmental assessment that says it's safe to do it, all done. It is ready for lease sale. The provision was not in the original bill when it came out of the

Resource Committee, but was added almost with no debate, no hearings, and no real serious discussion. Make sense? No.

The next part here locks up 18 percent of our Federal onshore production of American natural gas. It cuts the categoric exclusion provision. And I will explain that a little in my terms. I helped put that in in the 2005 energy bill.

Redundant NEPAs allowed the anti-energy people from allowing the Americans to produce energy. So, land would be leased in the West, mostly in the West, and 5 or 6 years later, after they purchased the rights to it, they still weren't producing it because they were required to do multiple NEPAs. They do a NEPA on the original plan. Then they have to do a NEPA for the road plan. Then they have to do a NEPA for every site. And then for putting in the production equipment, another NEPA. So year after year after year, a NEPA study takes about a year. So years later, they still didn't have any production.

And so we said that one NEPA that covers all the aspects of producing energy in that area should be done, and that should pass the test. And we shouldn't do redundant NEPAs. But now they want to go back.

It locks up, this is huge, the third one, 2 trillion barrels of American oil from western oil shale. Now, western oil shale, everybody knows, is a huge oil reserve, and the underground can be tricky. We have oil companies on some of the private land they own there trying to release this, and they think they have a way to do it. It is somewhat similar to the Canadian tar sands. The Canadian tar sands have been around since I was a kid. In fact, I have a neighbor who bought rights to them many, many years ago, and he's now laughing because everybody wants to buy them at huge prices. And I don't know whether he has sold them yet or not, but I was kind of stunned that he was smart enough 30, 40 years ago to buy tar sands in Canada as an investment. And today they're producing 1.5 million barrels a day there. It's just over the American border into Canada. And their goal is to be up to 4 to 5 million barrels a day down the road. And fortunately for America, most of that's coming here. Our biggest supplier of energy is Canada, our good friend.

Now, Canadians are a little frustrated with us because they produce their energy resources. They're offshore, they're onshore, they're tar sands, and we keep locking ours up. Thus, North America has the highest natural gas prices because of us. If we produced equal to Canada, North America would have reasonable natural gas prices, not the highest in the world. But they keep selling to us.

Now, this 2 trillion, this bill stops the leasing program for oil shale reserves on Federal lands that will hold enough oil to supply us for 228 years. Now, that's a study. If it's half that, if

it's a third of that, it's huge, and it could eliminate our dependence on, and that's the only reserve that I know of, that if we learn how to release it, could eliminate our foreign dependence on energy. But that's the only way.

□ 2145

But that is the only way. This is more oil than the entire world has used since oil was discovered at Drake well in my district 150 years ago. Meanwhile, in China, they are busily developing their oil shale fields.

The next one here locks up 10 million barrels of oil from the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. That is, again, an area that was set aside for production, set aside in 1923 for production of future energy needs in America. Then the next one breaches legitimate legal offshore energy contracts, and I have had several of those companies come in to me and say, hey, this is a contract. If Congress changes that, we are going to win in the Supreme Court because Congress doesn't have the right. I am not saying I agree with these leases and how they were done. They were done in the Clinton administration, but we have this legislation coming that is going to override those. It won't work. It will just delay the process. I am hoping that we can continue to negotiate these leases and have them out of the way.

The next one is really foolhardy. There are a lot of Members of Congress who hate oil companies. This inflicts a \$15 billion tax increase on the American oil and gas industry. Seventy-five to 80 percent of the energy in this country is not produced by Big Oil. It is produced by little companies. I have two refineries in my district who will now pay a higher tax than any other company in Pennsylvania if this bill becomes law because we are going to tax the production of energy with an added tax over any other business.

Now, when you are short on something, and the prices are high, if you want to get less of it and make the prices higher, the sure remedy is to tax it. Well, they are going to tax it. I am not going to, but they are going to tax it.

Now, the next one down here, I am a big proponent of offshore drilling, and I will talk about that later, but I am also a big proponent of using coal, to gasify it, to make electricity, and that is called clean coal, and make liquids out of it. Penn State has a process to make jet fuel out of coal. The Air Force is in the process of trying to figure out how to have 60 percent of their jet fuel available from nonimport sources. They are working with natural gas right now. They are doing other studies, too, but they are working with natural gas now. If they are successful, and they get 60 percent of their 3 billion gallon a day, they are going to inflate gas prices even more, which will make it harder to heat our homes. I will talk more about that later. But coal to liquids should be getting the

same treatment as cellulytic ethanol. I am for cellulytic ethanol, and this administration is funding six plants. It is still in the test tube. We are still working at it in the university laboratories, but I am for building those plants and streamlining this process. I think one plant is going to try to make it out of garbage, another switchgrass, another cornstalks, another one is woody biomass, but we need to be doing all those things. But to be not having an equal emphasis on coal to liquids, I fault this administration, and I fault this Congress. Because that is the largest energy source we have. We need to figure out how to use it cleanly. We need to be developing, and again, curtail our dependence on foreign countries.

Now, we also have in the legislation a false expectation by mandating a 15 percent of renewables to make electricity. I wish that were doable. I would vote for it if it was. I didn't vote for that. I voted against that amendment. I fought against that amendment. We currently make 3 percent of electricity with renewables because they will not count hydro, only the new hydro, and there is not much new hydro coming down the line. So to go from 3 percent, they are going to allow cost savings of 4 percent, so that gets us to 7, but the growth of wind and solar is nowhere near enough in the next decade or two to get us to 15 percent.

Now, what we are going to do is we are going to force those companies to pay fines. Do you know who is going to pay the fines? The electric rate users. Some States will come close because they have a lot of wind, and there are States that have solar. But most States will not. It should be an incentive-type program. It should be a carrot, not a stick. We should be incentivizing renewables for electricity. But when you mandate 15 percent, and I have charts and graphs to show that. I don't have them with me tonight. But there is no way to get there in the time frame they are asking.

I am going to change charts here and talk just a little bit about current energy use in America. These don't change a lot. I have been watching them for a long time. Currently, petroleum is 40 percent of our energy needs, and 66 percent of it comes from foreign, unstable countries. That number is going to escalate if we lock up the Roan Plateau. It is going to escalate if we lock up shale oil. It is going to escalate if we tax energy production and make it more expensive. Natural gas is 23. Now, this is a growing figure. It is interesting because about 12 or 13 years ago now, Congress removed the prohibition of making electricity with gas. That is when gas ceased to be cheap. We have always had \$1.80, \$2 gas, and it would go up a little, down a little, maybe up to \$3 a year, \$3-1/2 or \$4. I remember some of those years in the seventies when it was a lot more costly to heat our homes. But it would come

back to \$2 or \$1.80. It never went much above \$2. Now, it is way above. It is \$8 and something right now, and we are still not into the high season. The average price for the year is somewhere between 9 and 10, and then when you get transmission costs and storage costs, we, as consumers, are going to be paying \$13, \$14, \$15 for gas.

I believe that clean, green natural gas is really our best hope. But we have to drill for it. And people in this Congress are just as much against drilling a gas well as they are against drilling an oil well. And I think they are wrong on both. But there is no good argument. There has never been a beach dirtied by a gas well. There has never been an environmental threat by a gas well. It is the cleanest fuel we have. There is no NO_x, no SO_x, and a third of the CO₂ if that is keeping you awake at night.

Now, coal is 23 percent. Coal has great potential for liquid or gas. But there is a real push around here against coal. I think it is a mistake. It is the one we have the most of. If we continue that, gas will be the winner, and gas prices will continue to rise. And if we continue to have the highest gas prices in the world, we just won't be a competitive country. Nuclear is at 8 percent. From the 2005 bill, we have a lot of companies going in for permits now. We need all 35 that are starting the process to be completed in a very short period of time if we don't want this figure to go down, because the energy electric use in this country is rising fast and nuclear is about 20 percent of it. But that figure will drop because nuclear has not grown. We haven't built a nuclear plant in a long time. The interesting part is, as we attempt to build nuclear plants, the shroud, which is the big steel casing that they use, we don't make them in America. The companies that are that far along in the permit process are buying them from Japan. I find that unfortunate, and someone told me an awful lot of the components are going to be purchased in Germany because we don't have the capacity because we have done so little with nuclear in the last decade.

Hydroelectric, a figure that continues to decline. Biomass is the fastest growing figure. That is wood waste. A lot of it is being used. There's a million Americans heating their homes with pellet stoves. That is compressed wood waste. We have power plants that are using it to top the coal load so that they can slide under the environmental standards because it burns a lot cleaner than coal. We have a lot of companies in the wood business and around where there is wood waste using it to heat their factories. Most of the dry kilns drying wood are now biomass burners. So biomass has just been sort of growing on its own because sawdust used to be a commodity. I remember in Pennsylvania when I was in State government, they were trying to make it a hazardous waste. I fought that because

it is not a hazardous waste. And now it's a commodity that sells. People want it.

Geothermal, a nice way to heat your homes if you are not in zero climate. In a mild climate, it is a good exchange of using underground water, whether you have a loop system where you have a big piping system with water or whether you drill into the aquifers and use that water, you take heat out of it in the wintertime to warm your home, and you take cold out of it in the summertime to cool your home. But, again, it is an investment up front. I know people who have it. If they build a second home, they usually put it in unless they are in a high zero where there is a lot of cold weather. It has its limitations when the weather is zero.

Wind and solar, this is the part that I find scary. Too many Americans think that wind and solar are prepared to become major energy sources. You can see the numbers, 0.06, 0.12. If we double those numbers, they are still a pretty small fraction, and it will take years to do that. But, unfortunately, an awful lot of Americans want this group right here to be our major energy source. I wish there was a way to do that. There are an awful lot of Members of Congress who think petroleum, gas and coal are just evil and we shouldn't do any more production of it, and they won't vote for a bill to lease land. They won't vote for a bill to open up areas. Some of them are against nuclear. Some aren't. That is a mixed bag. But, folks, this is the major part of America's energy production. It is 94 percent of our energy production, nuclear, coal, gas and petroleum. And it will be a major part of our energy portfolio for a long time whether we like it or not because none of these are prepared to take over. I wish they were.

Now, there's a lot of creative things. But they are little niche players. They are little niche markets. They are not huge volumes. So it is important that Americans understand that whether we like it or not, fossil fuels are going to be our major energy source a lot longer than we want them. If we continue to not produce our own, then we are going to have to buy them from foreign countries.

Now, I want to talk about natural gas a little bit. This is America's gem. We have lots of natural gas. And I find it astounding that so many Members of Congress and three administrations in a row have locked up our Outer Continental Shelf, which has huge reserves of clean, green natural gas. I don't understand it. I don't know what they are thinking about. I don't know what their hopes are or dreams are, because, folks, we can't afford to continue to do that. Natural gas is a far more bigger part of our life than most people realize. Now, you see all of these products here. They are all made with natural gas. Not only as a heat source, but as an ingredient. Somewhere here you will find soaps and skin lotions and skin softeners. Yes, ladies, the skin

softeners that you love and we all like that keep our skin soft are a direct derivative of natural gas stock. Polyurethane, plastics, petrochemicals, fertilizer, all made, fertilizer that we grow corn with to produce ethanol, 70 percent of the cost is natural gas. It is the reason in how we make all of these products. And yet we lock it up and treat it like it is something evil. I just plain don't understand that.

We have a bill that opens up the Outer Continental Shelf. Now, we are only doing it for natural gas. I think it should be for both because every other part of the world produces both. But I have not been able to get natural gas here. Now, we passed a good bill last session in the House that opened up gas and oil both. But we didn't get any action in the Senate. So we are going at it cautiously this time, just natural gas. This bill is very States' rights oriented. We will lock up the first 25 miles, can't produce it, that is out of sight. Eleven miles is sight line. The second 25 miles, States have a right to open up if they want to just by passing a State law. We will repeal the moratorium, but it doesn't repeal unless the States pass a bill. Now, the second 50 miles will be open unless the State passes a law and this gives States rights for 100 miles to close it. Now, this is much more conservative than I would like, but we are trying to get some natural gas for America to stop a calamity of starving our industry and our homeowners from affordable natural gas. Now, the second 100 miles would be open, period.

□ 2200

Those who produce natural gas say this would help immensely because clean, green natural gas can be our bridge to renewables. To make ethanol, we use a huge amount of natural gas. If we go to a hydrogen society, the only good way right now of making hydrogen quickly is natural gas. Natural gas is used to make biodiesel. Natural gas heats 50 some percent of our homes; 58 percent, I believe. It runs our major industries. It's the major feedstock for the polymers and plastic and fertilizer and petrochemical. We use huge amounts of it to make bricks and glass and steel and aluminum and to bend metal and to treat products, heat-treat things.

In my district, we have the powdered metal industry. They use huge amounts of natural gas to make that new powdered metal product that has brought the price of cars and vehicles and all kinds of moving parts down because it's so much less expensive than the old machining and forging of parts. Powdered metals. But they heat treat it with clean, green natural gas.

Natural gas is the fuel that should bridge us to where some kind of new energy, whether when we learn how to release hydrogen from water and then learn how to transport hydrogen safely, it takes years to develop all of the facets of an industry so that it becomes

our stable fuel source of the future. We need to be doing everything we can do in America for renewables. But we need to have adequate fossil fuels, and, specifically, natural gas.

Now, my bill rewards some people. The States would get up to \$150 billion in royalties because States would get 30 some percent. There would be \$100 billion left over in the Treasury of money we wouldn't have to pay in taxes because we could get the royalty off the gas, not oil. Now we have some cleanup funds here that I think are pretty unique: \$32 billion for renewable energy research. That is real money to allow us to develop the fuels of the future. We have \$32 billion for carbon capture and sequestration research so we can learn how to take the CO₂ from coal plants and the CO₂ from any fuel we burn and utilize it somehow, or sequester it. We have \$20 billion to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, exactly what they need; \$20 billion for the Great Lakes restoration, exactly what their program needs; \$12 billion for the Everglades restoration; \$12 billion for the Colorado River basin restoration; \$12 billion for the San Francisco Bay restoration; and \$10 million for LIHEAP and weatherization to help the poorest among us make their homes energy efficient and make energy affordable by helping pay their energy bills.

America is at a crossroads. We have been the big giant of a Nation, the powerful Nation all of our lifetimes. You know, it makes me sad to think that this Congress and administrations were unwilling to in totality agree and deal with the energy issue, making sure that America has available, affordable energy. Folks, that's doable.

I know there are people who talk on this floor about energy independence. That is really not doable. The only way we can be energy independent is if we got oil from the shale rock in large quantities over a period of time and where we no longer had to import oil. We import 17 percent of our natural gas today. If we opened up the gas field, we wouldn't need to import any. We would have lots of gas.

This is an interesting point about natural gas. We could fuel a third of our auto fleet. One of the problems with using gas in a vehicle is you can't go as far. You can't put a big enough tank in there. But we have lots of vehicles that don't go anywhere. We have all the service vehicles that are out servicing our homes, whether they are heating contractors or air conditioning contractors or lawn services, they could fuel up every night. In fact, they are developing ways you can fuel up from your gas line in your house if you have gas in your home. They are working on a way to fuel a car.

Every construction vehicle could be on natural gas because they already are fueled by a truck that comes up to the construction site and fills up the tractors and fills up the Caterpillars and all the heavy equipment and the trucks. Every taxicab could be on nat-

ural gas because they don't go big distances. Every school bus, every local person who doesn't drive a long distance could fuel their vehicle with clean, green natural gas.

If we opened up the gas fields that are really available to us, it could be a whole lot cheaper than oil. A whole lot cheaper and a whole lot cleaner. No knocks, a third of the CO₂. I don't understand why we haven't embraced natural gas as our bridge fuel to the future, as I said previously.

But, folks, America better think very seriously in the weeks ahead. We don't have a long time to wait. Energy prices are going to continue to skyrocket because we are competing the whole world for the energy because we are buying it from them. If we produced our own, we don't have to worry about that.

I understand the complacency when it was \$2 for gas and \$10 for oil and it was so cheap. But, folks, it's not cheap today and it is never going to be cheap again. Now we do need to use less, we do need to conserve, we do need to keep continuing to research how to produce things with less fuel, heat our homes more efficiently, make them more energy efficient. We, in the meantime, need a strong, viable source of energy for America, and clean green, natural gas is the bridge to our future.

I hope and pray that this Congress will suddenly get a sense of urgency about the energy problems in this country.

Mr. Speaker, \$94.53 oil should scare us into movement. We should have fear in our hearts, because this isn't the ceiling, as I started out at the beginning. There is no storm in the Gulf, no countries tipped over, no terrorist threat that has taken out supply. If they all happened simultaneously, only God knows what energy would be. It is imperative. Congress is the reason we have high energy prices, because they have locked it up.

There is also a lot in Alaska. There are huge reserves in Alaska that are not shown on this map. Congress has locked up this energy and three administrations have supported the moratorium for twenty-six years.

We are the only country in the world to lock up our own resources and force ourselves to buy from unstable countries who will own us. They are going to have the resources to literally buy every good, profitable business in this country. They are going to buy whatever they want to, because we are going to be forced to sell it to them, because when you are paying \$95.43 for a barrel of oil that it costs them a dollar or two to lift in their country, they have nothing but riches.

Americans are going to have nothing but tragic situations, where our businesses can no longer afford to be here. We won't manufacture anything in this country of substance, and Americans will struggle to heat their homes and afford to travel around this beautiful land.

Energy affordability, available, affordable energy for America, should be the cry of this Congress. And if this Congress doesn't do that, if the energy bills when they come out that the House and Senate have now are not altered and talk about opening up energy, about increasing supply, that is the only thing that brings down prices.

Folks, we need to conserve, but we can't conserve our way out of this problem. As a country, we are demanding more energy every day as we grow, as our number of people grow, as the number of people that drive cars grows, as our population grows.

Folks, available, affordable energy is the issue that can bring this great country down to where it is a second-rate nation. I don't want that to happen, and I hope Americans will push their Congress Members into making available, affordable energy the number one issue in this Congress before we adjourn the 110th Congress, and that we deal with this issue, because we can deal with it.

This is an issue we can change. It won't change quickly, but we can make a lot of right moves. We can deal with all of the different forms of energy. We can open up supply for gas and oil. We can do coal-to-liquids, coal-to-gas. We can give nuclear another push. We can promote all the renewables and look for new transportation fuels to blend with our current fuels.

Ethanol has potential. Corn ethanol has limited potential, but there are problems with it. The biggest problem with ethanol, and I am not against it because it is made out of American products, but it is competing with our food supply. And ethanol does not go in the pipeline. The majority of our gas stations deliver by pipelines, and you can't put it in the pipeline. Already, with the ethanol plants we have, we have distribution problems, because you need a blending station to blend it and then need to haul it by truck or trailer. That is a system not in place adequately around the country.

We have as many ethanol plants under construction as we have producing ethanol today. I am not saying that is bad, but it is not a situation without problems and great challenges. Ethanol takes a tremendous amount of natural gas to make it. In Pennsylvania they are talking of doing a couple plants with coal. Many States would reject that. I commend the Pennsylvania government for going in that direction, using waste coal to make it so it doesn't further strain our natural gas supply.

But as we look at this map and think about Alaska, America can be far more self-sufficient with available, affordable energy if we just have the desire and the willingness to produce more of our own. I believe we must if we want to compete in the global economy.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to: